BOROUGH OF TOTNES.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

TO THE TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

In compliance with the Order of the Local Government Board, I herewith present you with the Annual Report for the year 1897.

POPULATION.

The estimated population of the Borough to the middle of the year is 4,100. On November 9th the area of the Borough was extended so as to include an additional 142 inhabitants. The estimated population for the end of the year is therefore 4,242, and the average population for the year 4,120.

BIRTHS.

The number of births during the year has been 84, equal to a birth-rate of 20·49 per 1,000, or, with the correction for the additional population as above, 20·385 per 1 000, as compared with 25·12 last year.

DEATHS.

The number of deaths registered during the same period has been 73, viz., 55 in the Borough 17 in the Workhouse and one in the Cottage Hospital. Four of the deaths that occurred in the Workhouse, and the one in the Cottage Hospital, have been of residents of the Borough, making the total 60; also one death has to be deducted from this number, that of a non-resident who was found drowned in the River Dart. The corrected total is, therefore, 59 for the Borough, equal to a mortality of 14·39 per 1,000, or, making the correction for the additional population, 14·318 per 1,000. The mortality in 1896 was 14·64 per 1,000, and in 1895 19·42 per 1,000.

INJURIES.

There have been three deaths from injuries.

ZYMOTIC MORTALITY.

There has been no death from the zymotic diseases during the year. In 1892 the Borough was similarly free from deaths from this cause.

INFANT MORTALITY.

The number of deaths of children under one year of age has been 4, equal to a mortality of 47·62 per 1,000 births registered, as compared with 77·6 per 1,000 births registered in 1896.

PHTHISIS MORTALITY.

The number of deaths from phthisis has been 7 (the same number occurred from this cause in 1896), equal to an annual mortality of 1·7074 per 1,000. That of England and Wales from this cause was 1·73 per 1,000, estimated upon the ten years 1881 to 1890.

The ages at which the deaths occurred are summarised in Table A. Of the 73 registered, 37 were over 65 years of age.

The following table shews the deaths due to zymotic diseases for the last ten years :—

	1888.	89.	90.	91.	92.	93.	94.	95.	96.	97.	Tl.
Measles	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	9
Diphtheria	0	5	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	9
Whooping Cough	1	4	1	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	12
Typhoid Fever	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	3	3	0	11

Whooping Cough	12
Typhoid Fever	11
Measles	9
Diphtheria	9
	41

Equal to an average annual mortality of 1·021 per 1,000, estimated upon the population of the census of 1891.

CASES NOTIFIED.

The cases reported under the Notification of Infectious Diseases Act are recorded in the accompanying Table B. They were as follows, viz, :—Diphtheria, 1; typhoid fever, 2; erysipelas, 1. One of the cases of typhoid fever occurred in the Workhouse. In each of these cases I made a careful inspection of the premises where the disease occurred, and any sanitary defects were remedied without delay.

ROUTINE WORK.

The memoranda of the Local Government Board in reference to Public Health have been carefully considered, and an abstract of that relating to the closing of public schools to prevent the spread of disease has been sent to the masters and attendance officers of the schools. Houses and drains are continually being inspected, and any defects at once remedied. The report of the Inspector of Nuisances accompanies my report. The condition of the water has been a frequent subject for inspection. I have had to make various recommendations to the Sanitary Authority for improving the sanitary condition of the Borough, all of which have been carried out.

GENERAL REMARKS.

The rate of mortality has been very low this year, especially in reference to children; this is a very favourable indication as to the sanitary condition of the town. The number of cases of infectious diseases is also exceptionally small, viz., 4, as compared with 15 in 1896, 16 in 1895, and 32 in 1894. I congratulate the Sanitary Authority on this very satisfactory state of the Borough.

The rainfall in the neighbourhood has been 42·24 inches, as compared with 43·76 inches in 1896, and 44.36 inches in 1895.

I am, Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
KENNETH R. SMITH, M.D., D.P.H,
Medical Officer of Health.

Totnes, 12th January, 1898.

REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR OF NUISANCES.

TO THE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF TOTNES.

GENTLEMEN,

I have to report that I have, during the year ending December 31st, 1897, frequently visited all parts of the Borough, and the following nuisances have been reported and dealt with :—

The smoke test has been applied to the drains and closets of 22 houses, with the result that 14 were found defective, and 8 sound and in good repair. Of the 14 defective drains and closets, some have been repaired and in several cases new pipe drains have been laid and new wash-out closets substituted for defective closets, with the town water laid on and flushing apparatus for flushing the same; the whole having been smoke tested after completion and passed as correct.

Defective privies and drains, other than those smoke tested, 5; keeping swine contrary to the Bye-Laws, 1; nuisances from other causes, 6.

All the nuisances have been abated with the exception of 3, of which the notices had not expired on the 31st December.

I have made a special inspection and report on all piggeries in the Borough.

I have made 37 written reports to the Sanitary Authority during the year, and 22 written notices served for the abatement of nuisances, and 12 for applying the smoke test.

I remain, gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
JAS. CLARK,
Inspector of Nuisances.

7, High Street, Totnes, January 13th, 1898.